



California Postsecondary Education Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Humboldt State University Awarded \$994,032 Improving Teacher Quality Grant

SACRAMENTO — November 7, 2005 — Humboldt State University has won funding for an ambitious professional development project that aims to strengthen student content learning in science, mathematics, and history across a six-county region of northern California. The university was awarded a four-year grant of \$994,032 by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) in a statewide competition. Called the “Redwood Area Academic Literacy Initiative” or “RAALI”—the project will serve teachers in 16 school districts throughout the region. Humboldt State will partner with Sonoma State University, Konocti Unified School District, and other local educational agencies to train teams of teachers. Strategies that include summer institutes, mentoring and coaching, and online communication will ultimately serve more than 100 teachers in a region known for high rates of rural poverty and low college attendance rates.

The grant is part of the federal Improving Teacher Quality Program funded under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It is the latest edition of a long-standing federal program aimed at improving student achievement through professional development for teachers. Over two decades of administering the program, CPEC has awarded more than \$75 million to colleges and universities working with high-need K-12 schools throughout California. The 2005 grants focus on improving academic literacy in high schools. They also require rigorous evaluation research to demonstrate how the professional development affects student achievement.

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Taking note of this requirement, CPEC Executive Director Murray Haberman observed that “Being required to demonstrate the impact of the professional development on student achievement, not just on teacher behavior, is critical and supports CPEC’s overall commitment to accountability in educational programs.”

Howard Welinsky, chairman of the Commission, says the grants play an important role in making sure every student has a highly qualified teacher. “The program has had a long-term impact on helping teachers strengthen their content knowledge and their understanding of effective teaching strategies—key elements of education reform,” he said. “Humboldt State and its partner schools should be proud of the quality of their proposal and its potential for improving teaching and learning in the Redwood Empire.”

More information about the Commission and its work can be found at its website at www.cpec.ca.gov. For more information about the state program, contact Karen Humphrey, Administrator, Improving Teacher Quality Program, at 916-445-1504 or khumphrey@cpec.ca.gov. For information on the project described above, contact Dr. Jeffrey White at 707-826-5551 or jww12@humboldt.edu.

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The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. Its primary focus is to ensure that the state’s educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities.